Help at hand for hay fever sufferers

28 March 2012 - With the pollen season fast approaching, pollen forecasts are now available on the Met Office website.

The pollen forecast, sponsored by Benadryl®, uses our latest weather forecast information and combines this with pollen readings from across the UK. There are millions of hay fever sufferers across the UK, and the Met Office forecasts provide vital information to help reduce the impact pollen has on their health.

UK Pollen Network Manager at the Met Office, Yolanda Clewlow, said: "Variable weather conditions across the country mean that levels of pollen often vary greatly from day to day, so it's important that hay fever sufferer stay up to date with the latest forecast."

Throughout the season, Met Office forecasters will be working closely with the University of Worcester and Pollen UK to provide the most accurate pollen counts and pollen count forecasts for the UK.

The pollen forecast is part of the wide range of weather-related services offered by the Met Office, which also include the UV Index and Heat Health watch.

pollen forecast video transcript (PDF, 5 kB)

Find out more about the pollen forecast.

Contact information

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Pollen Forecast Video Transcript

Yolanda Clewlow – UK Pollen Network Manager

If you suffer from hay fever you will understand just how important the pollen forecast is. We now produce the pollen forecast here at the Met Office as part of our service to the public. We produce the forecast using current pollen data collected from around the UK which is mainly species type and number, we also factor in current weather information. You can access a lot more information on our website where you can use our daily pollen forecast to plan your activities and better manage your condition.

Did you know?
Many people who are allergic to Birch pollen can also have an associated allergic reaction to certain fruit and nuts, for example apples.

It's thought that around 15-20% of the population suffer from hay fever and many more may be undiagnosed, there are around four million sick days taken every year, and this is set to become more significant as hay fever rates increase with climate change.

Did you know?
Cities have lower pollen counts than rural areas but higher rates of hay fever.

Did you know?
Pollution stresses trees and plants causing them to release smaller, more allergic pollen as well as worsening the reaction of sufferers.

Pollen is collected from a number of sites around the UK, using a trap such as this one here at the Met Office in Devon. There can be up to a four week lag from the start of the season down here in the south and the start of the season further north. Local land features can have a bearing on your local pollen count as well for example, coastal counts can vary greatly from those further inland. The best way to manage your condition is to monitor the forecasts and avoid exposure on high count days.

For some other useful tips and links please go to our website www.metoffice.gov.uk